vehicle. They were then carried along with the general motion of religion in the community; and, without being aware of it, partook of its influence. In that relation, at worst, their nature was left free to counterwork their principles. [Burke should have said, one part of their nature restrained another.] They despaired of giving any very general currency to their opinions. They considered them a reserved privilege for the chosen few. But when the possibility of dominion, lead, and propagation, presented themselves, and they saw that the ambition which before made them hypocrites might rather gain than lose by a daring avowal of their sentiments, then the nature of this infernal spirit, which has evil for its good, appeared in its full perfection. Nothing, indeed, but the possession of some power can, with any certainty, discover what at the bottom is the true character of any man." *

Such phenomena as these, whether connected with superstition, or infidelity, have baffled all ordinary historical philosophers, or philosophic historians, to account for them. After we have read all that they can say about human madness and human passion—about pride, vanity, and malice—we feel as if they had merely explained some of the accompaniments* of these great movements, and shown why the stream took a particular direction, but without at all exploring the stream itself, which leaps up from one of the profoundest depths of the human heart, and needs from the other powers and propensities only a channel to flow in.

The more popular of the false religions which have spread themselves over the world—the superstitions of the East, of ancient Greece and Rome, of Mohammed, and of the corrupt Christian Church—have all given the most ample scope to these impulses in our nature, and to some of the worst passions in the human heart besides. What a strange compound, yet banded firmly together, of licentiousness and yet of rigidity, of loose morality and of unbending ritual 1 No Bywtera of superstition will be extensively adopted unless it provides for these opposing wants of our nature, unless it give open or secret license to wildness, and allow room or find employment for remorse. The two peculiar features of man's existing condition are evil passions and an evil conscience. No superstition can become popular which does not provide or admit something to meet the craving demands of both. Hence the grossness of Paganism, with its horrid and cruel sacrifices: hence the licentiousness and the tortures practised around the same Indian temple. BucchuB and Venus are to be found iri the same mythologies with Baal and Pluto, and under various names, and with minor individual differences, have been worwhipped over the larger portion of the Pagan world. Even in Home, which professed an abhorrence of the levity of the Greeks, there were, according to Valerius Maximiis, so many as 7000 bacchanals, among whose mysteries both prostitution and murder occupied an important place. Hence the love of war, with the stringent formularies that distinguished Mohammedanism in the days of its youth

and vigour. Tho apostate Christian Church seems to unite in itself all the elements found separately in every other superstition, and to be Catholic and all-embracing, not in its truths, but in its errors. We agree with De Maistre in thinking that "there is not a dogma in the Catholic Church, nor even a general custom belonging to the high discipline, which has not its roots in the extreme depths of human nature, and consequently in some general opinion more or less altered here and there, but common in its principles to all nations."[1] In the bosom of that Church there have been embraced at the same instant unbridled scepticism and profligacy, grasping superstition and the most profound deceit, with the asceticism of the anchorite, and the blind faith of the devotee. These things may seem inconsistent, and so they are; but

[1] Burke's Regicide Peace. [2] Du Pape.